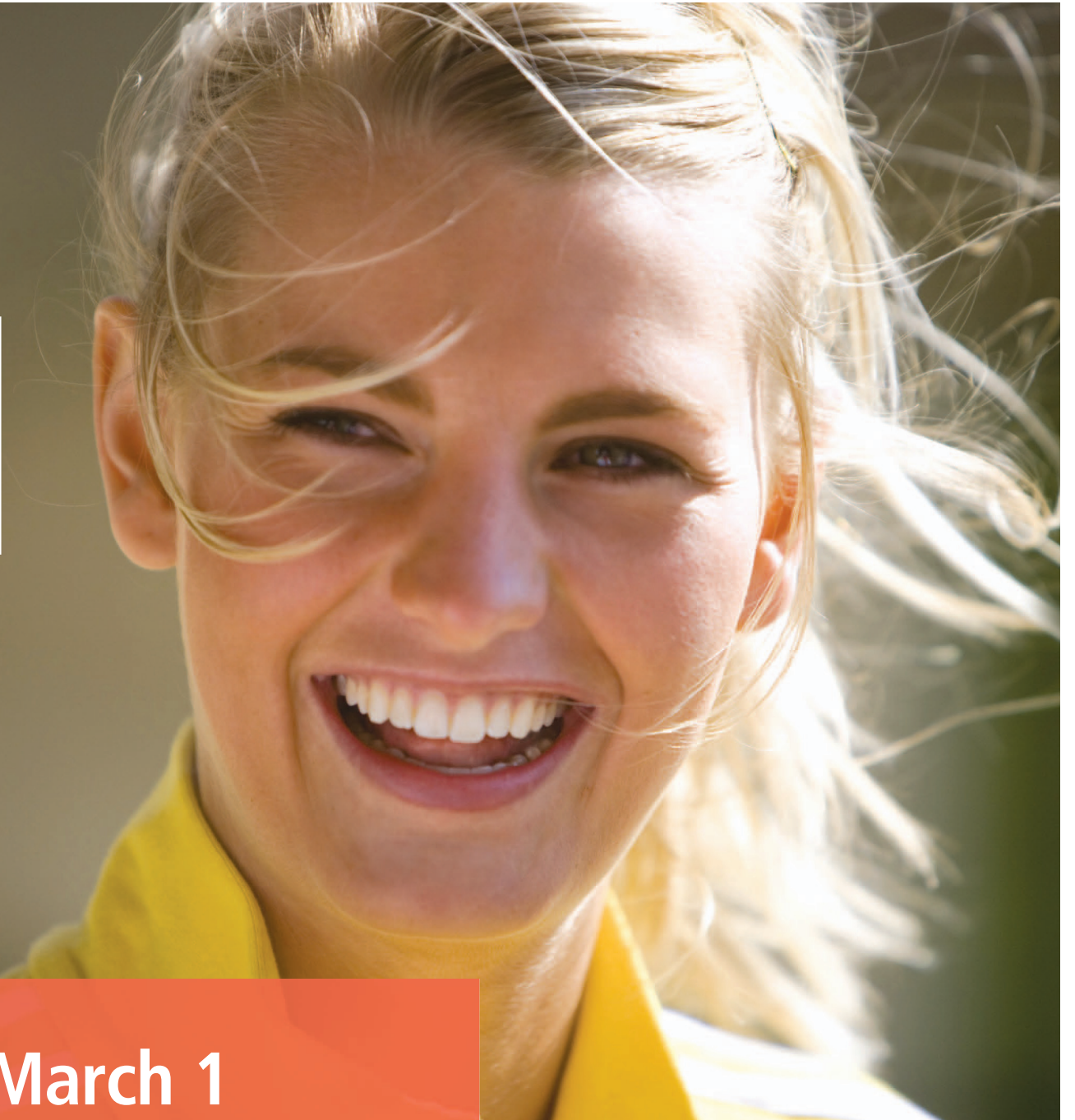


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Celebrity Buzz

Paltrow defends pop star Allen

pg 16



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Vancouver Games

Countdown to 2010

• Today
Security preparations for the Games, pg 3



• Coming up this week
Tuesday — How are Vancouver's homeless to be affected?

Wednesday — Views of Canadians on the streets.

Thursday — One-year countdown at Whistler

Friday — Unveiling of the Olympic Torch



Valentine's Day

Matters of the heart

- Workology
Wedding planning — a most romantic career, pg 12
- TV

Plan your viewing this week and curl up with your lover to watch, pg 15

• Coming up this week
Tuesday — Josey Vogels on the best exercise for your heart: Love

Wednesday — Georgie Binks takes on relationships, the most romantic Canadian communities, and why movies are such a popular date-night choice.

Thursday — Recipes for a cosy night in.

Grammy Awards

Viva la Coldplay



Musician Chris Martin of Coldplay performs during the 51st Annual Grammy Awards held at the Staples Center in Los Angeles last night. Coldplay took home three Grammys, including the Song of the Year for Viva la Vida. More coverage, page 14.

McIver in favor of dispatch audit

ALICIA FOX
for Metro Calgary

REVIEW Ald. Ric McIver is applauding a move by Police Chief Rick Hanson, who called for an independent review of the city's emergency dispatch services.

Although he said the services have made a lot of improvements recently, McIver, a former member of the city's police commission, said he would welcome an audit, which would put both the 911 and the non-emergency (403-266-1234) services under the microscope.

"I don't see it as a negative thing ... I hope everybody looks at it that way because Calgarians will benefit from the information if the audit is done," he said, adding that the call centres deliver "very valuable information to the officers when they're at calls as to who lives there."

The crucial information they receive often includes whether or not the suspect has a violent criminal record, and he said an audit would simply be a positive step towards further improving the safety of Calgarians and the officers that serve them.

"I think the audit will, if it's done, provide for valuable data which will be useful for (improving safety)," he said.

\$500K for two wards

Plan to increase number of wards to 16 draws criticism

JENNIFER HILLIKER
for Metro Calgary

A five per cent raise for aldermen has the city in uproar — but the monetary implications of that could be nothing compared to adding two more aldermen to the roster.

If City Council supports Ald. Andre Chabot's motion to increase the number of wards from 14 to 16, it could mean a heavier burden for taxpayers, but not much long-term benefit, according to some.

"The bottom line is rarely

do we create better government by adding more politicians," Alberta director of the Canadian Taxpayers Federation Scott Hennig said.

Each ward is allocated a budget of \$139,192 for salaries of assistants, communications, business expenses, travel and courses and seminars. Aldermen also receive a salary of \$96,940 per year, a \$3,000 spending account and a car allowance of \$9,400.

For two more aldermen, this will be an added cost of close to \$500,000 per year.

But Hennig says that's

just the beginning.

"I don't think the salaries are going to be the bigger problem," he said. "I think it will be the cost of entertaining their pep talks. They are going to debate for longer periods. Aldermen like to take on things like arts funding and sports facilities to ramp up their popularity — all this will drive up the cost."

Ald. Joe Ceci doesn't want to add two more aldermen either.

"I don't think taxpayers want to see it happen, or see the additional cost for

them," Ceci said.

Stephanie Kelly, 23, says she can't handle any more taxes. She's a mother of two and a new homeowner.

"Right now, they need to be focusing on better representation, rather than more representation," Kelly said. "At this point, they need to be focusing on the problems at hand — like the recession — rather than bringing in more costs to taxpayers."

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The Calgary Chamber of Commerce is hosting Atlantic premiers Robert Ghiz and Shawn Graham, along with ministers from Newfoundland and Labrador and Nova Scotia, as they are on a mission to explore and strengthen trade ties between the East Coast and Alberta. **METRO CALGARY**

Local



Run — or walk — for help

Registration is now open for the 32nd annual Sport Chek Mother's Day Run & Walk on May 10. The partnership with the Calgary Health Trust will support the Neonatal Intensive Care unit at the Foothills Medical Centre and the Special Care Nurseries at the Rockyview General Hospital. For more information visit www.mdrunandwalk.com. **METRO CALGARY**



Citytv

ROGERS™

The cons of private-public water systems

KRISTA SYLVESTER
krista.sylvester@metronews.ca

As the city of Calgary discusses its options surrounding the provision of regional water services, the possibility of third-party water service providers brings much heated debate.

While Metro last week covered the benefits of a private-public water system, there are also those who feel it would have a

negative impact on the city.

Sheila Muxlow, from the prairie chapter of the Council of Canadians, said while Okotoks and Edmonton have seemingly good partnerships with EPCOR, there are many downsides to public-private services.

"Unfortunately, it brings the same erosion of public accountability and transparency with the services in the process," Muxlow told Metro.

On Friday, EPCOR pointed out benefits of the pub-

lic-private system and said prices remain low in Edmonton and Okotoks where they operate, but Muxlow said there are no guarantees those rates will be the norm.

"Corporations are bound by law to put their shareholders' profits before the health of the public or the environment. That means they are seeking to improve their bottom dollar only," she said.

The Council of Canadians point out what hap-

"Unfortunately, it brings the same erosion of public accountability and transparency with the services in the process."

Sheila Muxlow

pened in Hamilton, Ont. — the first city to contract out water services — after council voted for a public-private partnership. After sewage floods, job losses and secrecy, the city took back operations of their water in 2004.

CUPE Alberta president

D'Arcy Lanovaz agreed that transparency and accountability coupled with cost concerns are all factors in why citizens shouldn't want their water services contracted out.

CUPE's main concern with the Edmonton model of services is that they are

one step closer to privatizing the entire system after city council there narrowly approved the sale of a key sewage plant.

Lanovaz said while he hasn't seen evidence Calgary is going the way that Okotoks and Edmonton did, he wouldn't support it either. "We would definitely be very opposed to anything like that happening in Calgary, and we would make sure everyone knows about the risks involved," he added.

Man shot twice during weekend refuses police aid

INJURIES A man shot twice in two nights is lucky to be alive, and police say the man should take their assistance.

Insp. Rob Williams said yesterday the man remains unco-operative after he was shot and wounded on Friday and Saturday nights.

"Two nights in a row is serious and we believe he's being targeted. Obviously, he is in danger," Williams said, adding both drive-by shootings resulted in non-life threatening injuries. **METRO CALGARY**

Flea market's memorial for slain man

ALICIA FOX
for Metro Calgary

A table once full of tools and manned by a gentleman with a big smile was replaced by a solemn memorial for Rino (Ray) Johnson yesterday at the Hillhurst/Sunnyside flea market.

Hundreds of visitors filed through the community centre, filling the table with flowers, chocolates and cards to the family — paying their respects to a man remembered as a kind soul.

Neighbour Dave Budnyk, who often crossed paths with Johnson, said Ray embodied the kind words others shared about him. "He was a very nice man, always willing to help. And we'll miss him."

Budnyk said Johnson was friendly towards Budnyk's foster kids and had "great garage sales."

By early afternoon, several pages in a memorial book had been filled with words of comfort for the family, as well as disgust towards what befell the 77-year-old man. Johnson was found murdered in an industrial park near Ram-



Flea Market goes at the Hillhurst-Sunnyside Community Association stop to pay their respects at a memorial table set up for Rino (Ray) Johnson, murdered nearly two weeks ago and abandoned in a Ramsay industrial area.

say on Feb. 1.

Earlier this week, Jason and Tosha Hubler were arrested after they were allegedly found travelling in Johnson's truck. Both were charged with first-de-

gree murder and theft-related offences on Saturday.

Friends of Johnson's at the flea market said that the same couple came to visit the man at his booth, which he had been operat-

ing for 15 years, several weeks ago.

Police believe Johnson was targeted as a result of a visit with the couple at their Bridgeland home on Jan. 30.

City considering animal-based biofuels for fleet

FUEL An animal by-product may soon be in the tanks of city trucks and buses.

City council will be considering the biofuel, called tallow, today as part of their green fleet strategy being developed this year.

While it is readily accessible and is a product that is normally thrown away, the use of tallow raises ethical issues, said city environmental director Dave Day.

"They (council) just don't want us supporting a product that, while it's attractive on the environment side, is associated with a lot of harmful results on the ethical side," Day said.

David Layzell, of the University of Calgary's Institute for Sustainable Energy, Environment and Economy, said he's not sure the public is prepared to make the sacrifices needed to fully invest in biofuels: "I don't think that the average Canadian realizes the scope and size of the changes we need if we're really going to make headway on the issue of climate change and energy security on a North American basis."

JENNIFER HILLIKER/FOR METRO CALGARY

metronews.ca
WHAT'S ONLINE TODAY

Video Expected aid for U.S. financial sector has investors optimistic for this week's trading at metronews.ca/canada

Lotteries

Friday, Feb. 6
Lotto Super 7: 1, 2, 8, 20, 33, 35 & 42 Bonus 15
Saturday, Feb. 7
Lotto 6/49: 14, 20, 24, 30, 34 & 37 Bonus 31
These results are not official.

Military struggling to boost personnel numbers

Despite lowering projections and launching massive recruiting drives, the military hasn't been able to increase personnel numbers enough to meet government pledges, a new report finds. Regular forces were supposed to be boosted to 65,537 in 2007-08, but numbers were only up to 64,403. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Canada



Bus driver faces DUI charge

The driver of a Toronto-bound bus has been charged with impaired driving after motorists called the police to report an aggressive driver. Officers stopped the Coach Canada bus, which was on its way from Niagara Falls, around 7:30 a.m. yesterday near Oakville, Ont. A 48-year-old from Niagara Falls been released on a promise to appear in court.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Examining the possible threats

GAMES While he believes that the likelihood of a terrorist attack during the 2010 Games is low, Simon Fraser University political science Prof. Douglas Ross warns that it's still a possibility. Below, he comments on some potential security threats.

- 1 Suicide bombers in high-volume areas. "That would maybe be the most probable."
- 2 An explosive hidden in a vehicle. "Something like a 500-metre to one-kilometre radius would just be utterly destroyed."
- 3 Terrorist organizations using fissile materials to create nuclear explosives. "That's the lowest probability but the highest risk."
- 4 Detonation of a radioactive dirty bomb. "This is at the low-end (of probability) but with a much higher consequence."
- 5 Biological agents. "Trying to ensure that nobody's carrying any little parcels of Anthrax-laden powder would be almost impossible."

**ANDREA WOO/
FOR METRO VANCOUVER**

Expert questions Games safety

RCMP officials say they are confident in their security plans for 2010

ANDREA WOO
for Metro Vancouver

VANCOUVER 2010 Games

As the estimated cost for Olympic security soars to nearly six times the original budget, an expert at Simon Fraser University says more needs to be done.

According to RCMP Assistant Commissioner Bud Mercer, there will be about 8,000 law enforcement officials on site during the two-week Games, securing the perimeters of Olympic venues and screening attendees for weapons and other prohibited items.

There will also be hundreds of surveillance cameras installed in and around Olympic sites as well as vehicle and pedestrian screening. All newspaper boxes will be removed from the perimeter of Olympic venues.

Cpl. Jen Allan, spokeswoman for the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security



Canadian Forces members seen in Stanley Park ahead of this week's Olympics security training exercise. Plans are being considered to set up army camps in the Vancouver-Whistler corridor during the Games.

Unit, said the ISU receives intelligence from both domestic and international security partners, conducts ongoing risk assessments and devises tactics accordingly.

"We're confident in

where we are in terms of planning," she said.

However, Douglas Ross, a political science professor at Simon Fraser University who specializes in foreign policy and international security studies, said

Vancouver has been ill-prepared from the get-go, calling the original budget of \$175 million — which has since jumped to about \$1 billion — "a joke."

"They're trying to classify and hide everything be-

Getting prepared

- Tomorrow, the Vancouver 2010 Integrated Security Unit will begin Exercise Silver, a five-day security training exercise across B.C.'s Lower Mainland and in Whistler.
- Security experts are also preparing for the possibility of terrorists seizing a B.C. Ferries vessel and of unidentified aircraft entering restricted air space.



cause they really haven't done enough," Ross said. He cites the lack of screening of all cargo at Vancouver ports as an example.

"If terrorist groups were to think that security was less than fully effective here ... they might get the idea that this is a good target where there will be a lot of sitting Americans. I'm not sure that people in Ottawa, or VANOC, are really taking this seriously."

News in brief

POLITICS The federal Tories have seen their lead over the opposition Grits slip after the release of the federal budget, according to a poll released Saturday. The Ipsos-Reid survey for

the CanWest media conglomerate put the Conservatives at 37 per cent support, while the Liberals were up three points at 31 per cent. The NDP were at 14 per cent, a drop of one point.

WINNIPEG Manitoba's chief medical examiner says security guards at the Health Sciences Centre in Winnipeg tried in vain to get help for a homeless man as he sat vomiting — and dying

— in the emergency department last September, the Winnipeg Free Press reports. After viewing security tapes a doctor said that guards tried "many times" to help Brian Sinclair.

KIDNAPPED A videotape that indicates two Canadians kidnapped in Niger last year are still alive has emerged, according to the news service Agence-France Press. AFP

reported Saturday that UN special envoy Robert Fowler and his assistant Louis Guay appeared on the tape and introduced themselves.

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Marijuana use ups testicular cancer risk: Study
 Marijuana use may increase the risk of developing testicular cancer, in particular a more aggressive form of the disease, according to a U.S. study. Current users were 70 per cent more likely to develop it than non-users, with 10-year-plus users, frequent users or men who started smoking before age 18 at the highest risk. **REUTERS**

World



Getting down to business

U.S. President Barack Obama's first televised White House news conference dealing with his \$827-billion US economic stimulus package should be a relatively business-like affair compared to previous ones: Richard Nixon's antagonistic showdown with journalists at the height of the Watergate scandal; George W. Bush's refusal to admit he followed false intelligence on Iraq; Bill Clinton's denial of ever having sex with a White House intern.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Australian bushfire kills at least 108

FIRE Australia's deadliest bushfire crisis eased early today, but the death toll kept rising with at least 108 people killed as families searched for scores of missing in the ruins.

Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd told Australian television the bushfires north of Melbourne, some of which police believe were deliberately lit, reached "a level of horror that few of us anticipated. There are no words to describe it other than mass murder."

The media are reporting the death toll could reach 170 as authorities searched hundreds of burnt-out homes. More than 750 houses were destroyed and some 78 people are in hospital. **REUTERS**

Combat rages in Sri Lanka

More than 1,400 civilians poured out of Sri Lanka's war zone yesterday, bringing the total in the last four days to nearly 14,000 as soldiers try to deal a death blow to the separatist Tamil Tiger rebels, the military said.

The rate of civilians trapped in fighting between the military and the cornered Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) has picked up sharply this week, signalling the onset of faster military operations to wipe out the guerrillas.

More than 50,000 soldiers are converging on a sliver of jungle in the Indian Ocean island's north-east to crush the LTTE — now estimated to number no more than 2,000 hardcore fighters — and end a war that has flared off and on since 1983.

Ongoing violence

- On Saturday, 35 Tamil Tiger fighters counter-attacked with an armour-plated vehicle and tried a suicide attack in the village of Puthukudiyiruppu.

- A week ago, Tiger suicide fighters drove an explosives-laden truck with another vehicle toward advancing troops, killing as many as 15 soldiers.

Combat raged at numerous locations in the 175 sq km battle zone, killing at least 11 guerrillas in a series of attacks and counter-attacks on Saturday, the military said.

Since Jan. 1, about 17,900 have fled the fighting. That is roughly between seven and 15 per cent of the total trapped in the area — aid agencies say around 250,000 are there, while the government says the number is about half of that.

Sri Lanka, aid agencies and rights groups have ac-

cused the rebels of forcibly keeping people in the war zone as human shields, conscripts and labourers. The Tigers deny that.

The pro-rebel website tamilnet.com accused the military of shelling roads and groups of civilians, killing more than 120 people last week, but cited no sources. The military denies targeting civilians.

Verifying battlefield reports is next to impossible since the war zone is sealed off to independent media. **REUTERS**

Treasury delays unveiling bailout

ECONOMY The Obama administration yesterday pushed back until tomorrow the announcement of a bank rescue plan as it pressed lawmakers to settle their differences over a \$800-billion US economic stimulus package.

The announcement of the bank rescue plan — which will seek to shore up some of the biggest commercial banks in the United States — has been postponed to allow the U.S. Senate to focus on a massive economic stimulus ahead of a vote tomorrow. **REUTERS**

Russia, U.S. talk relations 'reset'

DIPLOMACY Russia yesterday welcomed a pledge by the United States "to press the reset button" on relations with Moscow, in a sign the former Cold War rivals could repair relations.

U.S. Vice-President Joe Biden said at a security conference on Saturday it was time to end a dangerous drift in ties and work with Moscow.

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Sergei Ivanov, after meeting Biden yesterday, said the United States' willingness to co-operate "inspires optimism." **REUTERS**

News in brief

ECONOMY The International Monetary Fund is considering how it could provide support to emerging market countries vulnerable to the downturn,

despite the fact they have sound policies and strong economic fundamentals, "on a contingent, as-needed basis," a spokesman said. **REUTERS**

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North Korea missile test sparks tensions

South Korea's president said yesterday he has no intention of backing down to North Korea, which may be preparing to test-fire its long range missile. **REUTERS**

world 5

Indonesian leader pledges reforms

Indonesian President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono told a gathering of his Democrat Party yesterday he would push ahead with reforms if he won a second term in this year's elections.

The 59-year-old former general, seen as the most pro-business and pro-reform of Indonesia's presidential candidates, needs to win a strong mandate in order to have the power to overhaul the judiciary, civil service, and police, and deal with the impact of a global economic slowdown.

The president

• Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono won Indonesia's first direct presidential election in 2004 on promises to tackle graft, improve growth, and create jobs in Southeast Asia's biggest economy.

Yudhoyono's Democrat Party, a centrist party which won just 7.5 per cent of the votes in 2004, is well ahead of its more established rivals in the run-up to the April 9 par-

liamentary elections which will determine which parties can field presidential candidates.

An opinion poll last month showed 23 per cent of those surveyed would vote for the Democrat Party, potentially reducing the need to rely on several other parties in a coalition.

Yudhoyono also has a strong lead over former president Megawati Sukarnoputri, seen as his main rival in the July 8 presidential elections.

REUTERS

Israel, Hamas discuss swap

PRISONERS Israel and Hamas could carry out a long-discussed prisoner swap within six weeks, an Israeli cabinet minister said yesterday, playing down media speculation that a deal was more imminent.

Israel wants to retrieve Gilad Shalit, a soldier held captive in Gaza for 2½ years, as part of Egyptian-brokered talks on consolidating the Jan. 18 truce that ended a punishing Israeli offensive in the impoverished Palestinian enclave.

A flurry of press predictions that an exchange of jailed Palestinians for Shalit could be in place in time for Israel's national election tomorrow was angrily dismissed by outgoing Prime Minister Ehud Olmert as "exaggerated and damaging."

REUTERS

News in brief

ARRESTS Venezuelan investigators said yesterday that seven police agents and four civilians were arrested in connection with an attack on a synagogue that sparked international condemnation. The Venezuelan public prosecutor's office said the civilians included at least one security official from the synagogue and that all had been captured in raids over the weekend.

REUTERS

Brazil Amazon plane crash



Rescue workers examine the site where a turboprop plane crashed into the Manacapuru river yesterday, about 100 kilometres southwest of Manaus, the capital of Brazil's Amazonas state. Twenty-four bodies were pulled from the bottom of the river.

Presidential aides urge stimulus co-operation

LAWMAKERS Top aides to U.S. President Barack Obama yesterday urged Democratic and Republican lawmakers to set aside political differences and quickly approve a massive economic stimulus package this week.

"If there was ever a moment to transcend politics, this is that moment," Larry Summers, head of the White House National Economic Council, told Fox

News yesterday.

Yet, with the world watching to see how the new president and Congress respond to the financial crisis, more political fireworks were certain at the U.S. Capitol.

Squabbling will resume today when the Democratic-led Senate votes to end debate on an \$827 billion rescue package and clear the way for passage of the measure tomorrow. **REUTERS**



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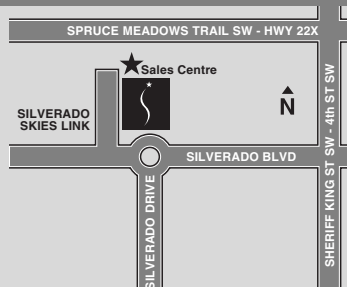
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Comment

Valentine's Day playbook

HineSight

Anne Hines



This is a public service announcement. Men, Valentine's Day is almost here. Now, in guy speak "almost here" means "today" or "Darn, I missed it." Or "Darn, I missed it again." But be forewarned, Valentine's Day is in five days. And to the woman in your life, five days is "almost here."

Some men are masters of the art of romance. My brother, David, for instance, buys his wife single red roses, makes cards by hand and takes the kids out so she can enjoy a quiet bubble bath. There's a term to describe men like this — still married.

But for those of you who are slightly more special-occasion-challenged, here's a little advice to help you avoid what happened last Valentine's Day ... and you know what that was. I offer The Hinesight Guide to Avoiding V. Day Disaster.

Picture this day as the Super Bowl of romantic occasions. You are the quarterback. How does a quarterback ensure the play gets completed? He doesn't say, "Um ... I'm just going to throw something together with whatever I can grab at Shoppers Drug

Valentine's Day

Mart." He plans ahead.

Begin with the gift. The gift is vital. But do not stress yourself thinking a gift has to be big or expensive. It just has to be perfect.

You see, to a man, a gift says, "This is a gift." To a woman, a gift says, "This is how I see you. This is how I feel about you in my deepest most truthful heart of hearts." The reason

women place so much importance on gifts is that we don't always have any other way

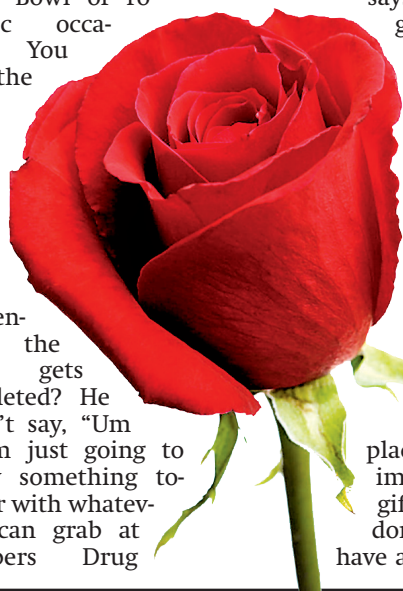
of getting that information. Remember, no woman wants to know you think of her as a red flannel nightgown or new car mats. Instead, look at the kind of thing she buys herself and buy her more of it.

Next, choose where to present the gift. As a rule of thumb, unless you met, had your first date and conceived your first child at a Taco Bell, fast food restaurants do not spell "romance." Making her dinner will score you big points, particularly if you don't watch TV while eating or suggest that, since you cooked, she do the washing up.

With a little attention to the playbook, you can run this Valentine's Day right through the end zone.

Or, in woman speak, you won't be sleeping alone for the next 12 months.

Anne Hines is an author and humour writer. She has written three novels and one collection of nonfiction humour.



Views

Anti-idling bylaw comes down to moral fibre

InTransit

Chris Phalen



calgaryletters@metronews.ca

I'm not against a law prohibiting carbon from swallowing up our skyline, and the moral aptitude for inciting such responsible behaviour is inarguable, but an anti-idling bylaw begins and ends with people becoming more informed and personally more accountable.

I'll be honest; I was pretty ho-hum about the mass effects of exhaust wafting into the atmosphere and into our lungs until I became a father.

It really is about the kids, but our collective air con-

sumption should be held to a higher standard.

In fact, I agree with theories claiming if we want to cut emissions, air or the atmosphere should be commoditized, boxed up, bought and sold like other valuable resources.

This way, vested individuals or companies would protect their marketable and profitable resource.

It isn't really that far-fetched when you consider the relatively new and huge bottled-water market.

But until capitalism sinks its far-reaching fangs into the potential oxygen sector, pundits at councils nationwide will be squandering and dilly-dallying to come up with the best way to meet federal, provincial and municipal pressures to cut back carbon emissions.

I think council should fo-

cus on education, work to improve congested traffic conditions, and fund more specialized initiatives targeting clean-air aspirations.

Linsay Luhnau, co-ordinator of environmental education at the Clean Calgary Association (CCA), thinks a bylaw would at least give citizens recourse if others don't heed educational campaigns.

"You can engage in all the education you want, but if I am at home and my neighbour gets up every morning at 6 a.m., idles their vehicle for an hour before they get into it, all the education in the world won't give me any recourse for it," she said.

Simply, it comes down to moral fibre and a desire to act on foresight for generations, meaning clean air should be a right for everyone.

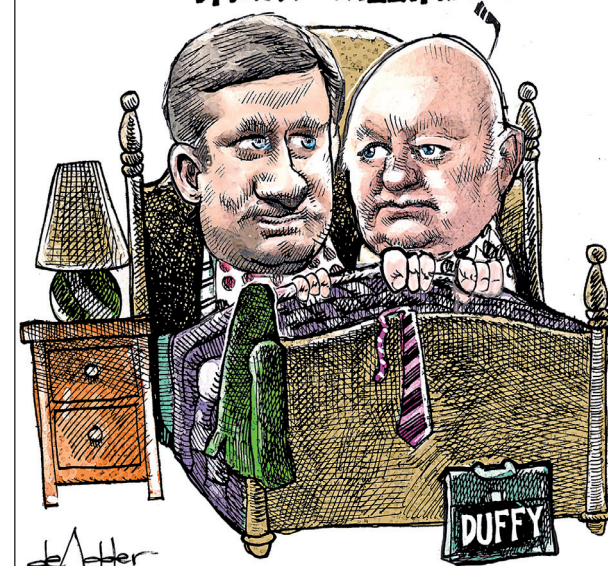
CCA is launching an anti-idling campaign on March 17, aptly labelling it "Go Green for St. Patrick's Day" in an attempt to contrast the finger-wagging, fear-mongering methods of deterrents employed by the City of Calgary.

"We are using a community-based, social marketing avenue, by encouraging people to join us in positive idle-free behaviour," said Luhnau.

To change our physical environments, and begin to cut through the induced smog clinging to our horizons, we must change the environment of our minds by recognizing that danger can exist without the fangs and claws.

Chris Phalen is a past contributor to Avenue magazine. He has also contributed to the Prince Albert Daily Herald, Globe and Mail and various magazines.

I THINK IT'S REPULSIVE HOW PREMIER GHIZ GOT INTO BED WITH PREMIER DANNY WILLIAMS.



Letters

Atheist ads won't promote understanding

Re: Atheist ads promote debate, understanding (Feb. 5)

"I can't see how they can be denied the right to advertise."

I can, and not just because it is extremely offensive to the majority of us who do believe in a God. Transit is for public use, so why are we going to put our beliefs and values there?

I don't see Muslims, Jews, Christians or Hindus advertising their beliefs on buses. Whatever happened to advertising gum or shampoo or something? This doesn't promote understanding, it brings into question Canada's values as a whole.

What's next? Putting up neo-Nazi signs in public washrooms?

NADIA RAMADAN, CALGARY

Shame on Toronto transit for running atheist ads

Re: Atheist ads promote debate, understanding (Feb. 5)

It is plain to see that spirituality has a strong bearing on morality, apart

from a few exceptions. No wonder our society is suffering from murders, rapes, and assorted crimes. Toronto transit will have contributed to the furtherance of these evils, which will continue.

As per the 30th anniversary Reader's Digest Reader, Nobel Prize winner Dr. Robert Millikan said, "Just how we fit into the plans of the Great Architect and how much He has assigned us to do, we do not know, but if we fail in our assignment it is pretty certain that part of the job will be left undone."

"But fit in we certainly do somehow, else we would not have a sense of our own responsibility. A purely materialistic philosophy is to me the height of unintelligence."

Abe Lincoln said, "I should be the veriest shallow and self-conceited blockhead, in my discharge of the duties of this place, if I should hope to get along without the wisdom that comes from God and not from man."

I applaud the Victoria and Halifax transit systems. Shame on Toronto transit.

ABE SAMUEL, CALGARY

It's your turn to tell others what you think. E-mail your thoughts and opinions to: calgaryletters@metronews.ca

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Going Green

Millionth milestone

Last Wednesday, members of One Million Acts of Green logged their one millionth act of green. During the campaign, participants logged an average 9,435 acts per day. GreenNexus has calculated the total acts of green to date to represent a reduction of nearly 56,000,000 kilograms of greenhouse gas. For more, see www.onemillionactsofgreen.com. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

EDITOR: MIKE DEREZYCKY, MIKE.DEREZYCKY@METRONews.CA

Putting a price on water

Some Canadian cities exploring their options for delivery

EarthTones

Sophia Dore & Andrew Laursen



earthtones.metro@gmail.com

Last week, Metro reported the City of Calgary is considering a third-party provider for regional water delivery. A private company would invest in infrastructure such as pipes and water treatment plants, and the public would pay the city or the private company to have clean water delivered to its houses.

As the water infrastructure decays and municipalities are increasingly strapped for cash for repair, privatization is being, or has been, considered in many cities across the country.

We Canadians love our water. And we use a lot. Between 1972 and 1996, Canada's rate of water consumption increased by almost 90 per cent, to 45 billion cubic metres per year from 24 billion cubic me-

tres per year. But our population increased by only 33.6 per cent over the same period.

Although it would seem that we live in a land with plenty of water, water conservation is important. We withdraw water from ground or surface water, we use it, and we discharge it, but the quality of the water we discharge is often not as good as the quality of water we withdraw (depending on how it was used and treated). We have contaminated some ground and surface water sources to the point where we no longer want to withdraw water from them.

So, it would seem that decreasing water use should decrease the discharge of pollutants. Privatization of water delivery systems would likely result in our water bills being linked to con-

sumption of water, which is currently true for barely half of Canadians. Many still pay a flat rate for water delivery. A 1999 study showed water use was 70

per cent higher when consumers paid a flat rate for water. Privatization could, then, improve conservation efforts through the cheapskate principle (we conserve for the sake of our wallets, rather than the sake of our resources).

However, can we count on private companies to safeguard the integrity of our lakes and rivers by being vigilant about the quality of the water they discharge? The city of Hamilton, Ont., privatized its water supply in the early '90s, and throughout the decade the city was plagued by discharges of sewage to basements across the city and to Lake Ontario. Although never proven, these discharges were blamed by many on the privatization of the water plants.

Discharges of sewage to our wa-

terways led to a dramatic decline in water quality. The high levels of nitrogen and phosphorus contained in sewage can lead to algal blooms, which, together with bacteria that degrade the carbon-based portion of the sewage, lead to oxygen concentrations in the water becoming depleted, which leads to the death of fish and other aquatic life. Also, direct sewage discharge can introduce pathogens to our water, such as E. coli, and contaminants such as metals, which can be transmitted either by direct ingestion of water or by consuming fish from contaminated water bodies.

Discharges of sewage do not only occur when private companies are at the helm, however. So, whoever is in charge of delivering and cleaning our water as we move forward will need to meet stringent guidelines and maintain strict controls over discharge, as well as promoting water conservation so we can maintain the privilege of ample clean water.

Sophia Dore is an environmental scientist with Conestoga-Rovers & Associates. Andrew Laursen is an assistant professor at Ryerson University.



SMALL STEPS
David Suzuki

Turning your life green

Canadians use more than eight billion disposable cups each year.

Meanwhile, Statistics Canada tells us that 30 per cent of us still drink predominantly bottled water. What's worse, the Union of Concerned Scientists tells us that 90 per cent of water bottles are not recycled.

If we all remember to carry our reusable coffee cups with us, we can reduce our impact significantly.

DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

News in brief

PROTOTYPE Canadian architecture firm MOSS SUND, in partnership with industrial and mechanical design firm figlforty, recently introduced its new rain storage and harvesting prototype that allows homeowners to conserve water and increase their home's green space. Called CISTA, the prototype works by capturing rainwater flow from a home's eavestrough into a storage tank. This water can then be stored and used for lawn and garden maintenance. CISTA is undergoing testing this year and designers are hoping to have the units on the market for spring 2010.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Art world under threat from climate change, UN experts say

Art treasures in tropical nations are under threat from climate change, which is likely to speed decay, UN experts said yesterday.

"The art world is made of materials that bugs like," said Jose-Luis Ramirez, head of the UN University's program for biotechnology for Latin

America and the Caribbean.

"Climate change is a threat because it is going to increase the amount of fungus and bugs in many regions," he told Reuters of a meeting of experts in Caracas this week on new ways to protect art collections.

Much of the world's cul-

tural heritage is made of canvas, wood, paper or leather, which "in prolonged warmth and dampness, attract mould, micro-organisms and insects,

causing decay and disintegration," a UN University statement said.

Many museums, especially in tropical nations, lack even air conditioning

to protect collections of paintings, sculptures and other art from likely shifts in humidity and temperature, Ramirez said.

The experts will discuss

new ways to protect art works, including harnessing micro-organisms, for instance, to remove fungus.

REUTERS

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Business

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Pay cuts

A move by the heads of some of Canada's biggest banks to give up millions of dollars in pay is a sign of things to come for corporate Canada. REUTERS

Canada lost 129,000 jobs

Billion-pound bank bonus stirs outrage

Canada's economy shed 129,000 jobs in January, bigger than any monthly drop seen in the last two recessions, pushing the national unemployment rate up 0.6 of a percentage point to 7.2 per cent.

Canada's manufacturing sector continued to bear the brunt of the economy's job losses last month as the automotive industry scaled back production in response to feeble consumer demand.

In manufacturing, 101,000 net positions evaporated in January, the largest monthly decline on record for the sector, according to Statistics Canada. About 36,000 of those positions were in Ontario, where a slew of recent lay-off announcements started to take effect.

The severity of the overall job cuts prompted some economists to warn the jobless rate could reach double digits, as hopes for a quick economic rebound grow dimmer.

"This was just an all-around bad report," said Derek Holt, vice-president of Scotia Capital Economics.

For all of this year, Scotia Capital has been expecting about 250,000 net job losses in Canada. "We just got half that in one month, so these are all uncharted waters on so many variables," Holt said. "I do not discount the risk of going double digits on the unemployment rates on both sides of the border."

Economist Derek Holt

PAYMENTS Reports that the Royal Bank of Scotland was about to award its staff a billion pounds in bonuses prompted outrage in Britain yesterday at a time of soaring unemployment and with a deep recession looming.

British Finance Minister Alistair Darling vowed that bankers who had lost money would not get big cash bonuses, though he said it was too early to follow U.S. President Barack Obama's lead and put a mandatory cap on bankers' pay.

Opposition politicians said Darling's decision to launch a review into banks' management and remuneration was too late to stop a wave of hefty bonuses.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

REUTERS

Business in brief

DRUG PROBE Ontario will lead a national probe prompted by a Toronto Star investigation in-

to the misuse of the painkiller OxyContin, a prescription narcotic frequently doled out by

doctors that can lead to severe addiction and death.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

INSURANCE MYTH #1:

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If insurance companies all ask the same questions, and sell the same basic policy, why do their rates vary so much?

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Rio's Leng quits, will not become new chairman

Rio Tinto Ltd./Plc non-executive director Jim Leng has quit the board and will not move into the chairman's role as planned. **REUTERS**

business **9**

Working moms look to Obama

Maternity leave. Affordable child care. Flexible work arrangements. When U.S. first lady Michelle Obama said she wanted to help working women balance career and family, American moms applauded — and immediately came up with a wish list of policy changes.

The list of demands from working parents in the United States is long, in part because family policies lag far behind most industrialized nations.

There is no paid maternity leave mandated in the United States, a situation shared by only three other

countries: Papua New Guinea, Swaziland and Liberia, according to a 2007 study by Harvard and McGill universities.



Michelle Obama

In the earliest days of the recent presidential campaign, Obama began meeting with

small groups of working mothers to hear their concerns and stories about the joy of raising children, the thrill of a great career and

the frustration of feeling you're not quite doing either as well as you'd like.

Obama has not yet indicated whether she will try to rewrite family and workplace policies directly, or simply use her profile to bring a spotlight to issues as a way of persuading lawmakers to act.

"No matter how she goes about it, she will have enormous influence — just the bully pulpit that she has will have an extraordinary influence on the debate," said Debra Ness, president of the National Partnership for Women & Families, a Washington lobby group. **REUTERS**

U.S. linking bank aid to loan changes

WASHINGTON U.S. Treasury Secretary Timothy Geithner said Saturday that banks getting public aid under a new rescue plan must help struggling homeowners by reworking their mortgages, according to Democratic sources.

At a briefing with House Democrats, Geithner was asked about a New York

"Institutions that get assistance will have to participate in loan modifications."

Timothy Geithner

Times report that the administration would not re-

quire banks to increase lending as part of the revamped effort to restore financial stability.

According to sources, Geithner said: "We are not doing what they wrote ... Institutions that get assistance will have to participate in loan modifications and meet other standards that we set." **REUTERS**

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Sports

SPORTS@METRONews.CA



Gold for Kucera

Calgary's John Kucera became the first Canadian to win the Men's Downhill title at the World Championships Saturday in Val d'Isere, France. Kucera had to watch 36 other competitors race after setting his time of two minutes 7.01 seconds. Kucera was also the only Canadian to finish the race. Erik Guay of Mont-Tremblant, Que., Manuel Osborne-Paradis of Invermere, B.C., and Jan Hudec of Calgary all crashed out.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canada lookin' good

VANCOUVER

2010 Games

The general consensus is that Canada has never experienced another sporting week like it just did internationally.

The podium parade continued yesterday with four gold medals at a World Cup short track meet in Bulgaria and Kristina Groves' silver medal at the world all-around championships in Norway.

This much can be guaranteed for one year from now: Canada's athletes are going to put on the best show ever seen by this country's at a Winter Olympics. You can pretty much guarantee they are going to win more medals than ever before, topping

the 24 at the 2006 Turin Games.

There appears to be too much depth in the ranks for that not too happen, with too many talented athletes and fine coaches.

A few examples to keep an eye on:

- Alex Bilodeau, moguls skier — This guy flies down the hill like the Grim Reaper's on his tail, and they have to notify air traffic control when he launches himself off the kicker.

- Matt Morison

Ottawa's Kristina Groves won silver yesterday at the World all-around speed skating championships in Norway.

— This 21-year-old snowboarder from Burketon, Ont., has a world championship medal, World Cup wins and a winner's mentality without the cockiness.

- Joanne Rochette, figure skater — You've got to give props to someone who

wears a dominatrix outfit in the gala, as she did yesterday at the Four Continents Championships.

- Kristina Groves, speed skater — Canada hasn't missed a beat even with Cindy Klassen and Jeremy Wotherspoon injured and she's a huge reason for that.

- The Gregg family — Defenceman Randy Gregg left the Oilers for a year to play in the 1988 Winter Olympics. Now a doctor, he and his wife Kathy, a two-time Olympic speed skater, have a son and daughter who could be on the 2010 team. Jessica won a gold medal yesterday at the short track World Cup, while Jamie is rising fast as a men's long track sprinter.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



NBA Lakers snap Cavs' streak



LeBron James is fouled by the Lakers' Pau Gasol in Cleveland yesterday. The Lakers handed the Cavaliers their first home loss this season, 101-91.

The heat's on A-Rod

STERIODS A sense of shock and disappointment was voiced yesterday in the wake of a report that baseball's highest-paid player Alex Rodriguez tested positive for steroids in 2003.

Major League Baseball withheld comment on Rodriguez after Saturday's Sports Illustrated report that the Yankees slugger was on a list of 104 players that tested positive in confidential testing. But not the nation's newspapers.

"A-ROID" shouted front page headlines in New York's Daily News and Newsday on Sunday.

"RODRIGUEZ" fronted the Trentonian of Trenton, New Jersey.

While Major League Baseball's drug policy banned the use of steroids without a valid prescription since 1991, there were no penalties for a positive test in 2003.

That year's confidential testing was conducted in agreement with the players' union to determine if there would be mandatory random testing in 2004

which was instituted

after a threshold of five per cent positive tests was exceeded.

Results of the confidential testing were obtained by the government in conjunction with the BALCO investigation and the alleged involvement of Bonds.

Major League Baseball president and chief operating officer Bob DuPuy said Sunday he was reserving comment on Rodriguez.

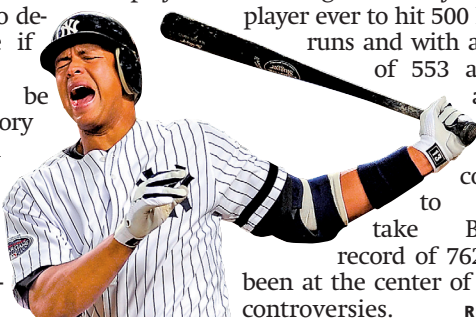
"I would prefer to see (the) entire article before commenting," he told Reuters in an e-mail about the Sports Illustrated report initially posted on its website.

Baseball commentators felt compelled to react.

"So now we have it, the Great American Scandal," wrote Tony Massarotti of the Boston Globe. "Alex Rodriguez meets Steroids. Finally, we have an intersection of our soap operatic A-Rod obsession and the plague that infected our national pastime."

Rodriguez, the youngest player ever to hit 500 home runs and with a total of 553 at the age of 33 is on course to overtake Bonds' record of 762, has been at the center of other controversies.

REUTERS



The Detroit Red Wings' Henrik Zetterberg hits Pittsburgh's Matt Cooke during the third period yesterday.

Conklin conquers Pens in Cup rematch

NHL RESULT

Red Wings 3 Penguins 0



Ty Conklin turned aside all 25 shots he faced to earn his sixth shutout of the season and Pavel Datsyuk scored twice as the Detroit Red Wings defeated the Pittsburgh Penguins 3-0 at Mellon Arena.

Conklin, who was a member of the Penguins last season, picked up his 10th career shutout.

Marian Hossa also lit the lamp for Detroit, which has won four straight after losing the previous five contests. It was Hossa's first game in Pittsburgh since leaving the team as a free agent in the offseason.

These two clubs clashed in the 2008 Stanley Cup Finals, with the Red Wings capturing their fourth Stanley Cup title in 11 seasons and 11th overall in club history. It was the first meeting of the two teams at Mellon Arena since the Red Wings' Game 6 Cup-clinching 3-2 victory on June 4.

Marc-Andre Fleury stopped 26-of-29 shots for the Penguins, who had a brief two-game winning streak snapped. Pittsburgh has dropped four of six.

Detroit was without left wing Tomas Holmstrom, who is scheduled to undergo hernia surgery and is expected to miss up to five weeks. Center Johan Franzen also missed the contest after suffering a hand injury in the Wings' victory over Edmonton on Saturday. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports in brief

WHL Brett Sonne scored two goals to lead the Hitmen to a 4-2 win over Kootenay in WHL action last night. Brandon Kozun and Paul Postma also

tallied for Calgary (47-73-1). Hitmen goaltender Martin Jones registered 18 saves for his league-leading 35th win of the season. METRO NEWS SERVICES

SCOREBOARD

NHL

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Detroit 3 Pittsburgh 0
Philadelphia 3 Atlanta 2
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Columbus 3 San Jose 2 (OT)
Los Angeles 3 New Jersey 1

Philadelphia 4 Boston 3 (OT)
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New Jersey 114 Denver 70
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TONIGHT'S GAMES
Phoenix at Philadelphia
L.A. Clippers at Charlotte
Houston at Milwaukee
New Orleans at Memphis

Former NBA no. 3 pick Morrison traded to Lakers

The Charlotte Bobcats sent struggling forward Adam Morrison and reserve Shannon Brown to the Los Angeles Lakers on Saturday for forward Vladimir Radmanovic. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

sports 13

Is spring training recession-proof?

If the North American economy is tanking, you wouldn't know it by looking at the industry spring training has become.

Dunedin Blue Jays special consultant Ken Carson admits it's tougher to sell in-stadium advertising this year, but says tourists haven't stopped ordering tickets.

In Fort Myers, Fla., 220 kilometres down the coast, local officials have agreed to spend at least \$50 million US on a new stadium to keep the Boston Red Sox in town, and are prepared to spend a few million more to also lure the Baltimore Orioles.

And this season, the Cleveland Indians moved their camp from Florida to Goodyear, Ariz., drawn by a training facility built with public money.

Even in a weak economy, money, both private and public, flows for spring training, though some experts question whether it's a wise investment for cities.

"You're kind of stupid to invest your money in spring training, when all the bang is going to come in six weeks," says Phil Porter, a professor at the University of South Florida who studies the economics of sport. "You're just not going to get a community that expands and grows."

Despite that kind of skepticism, the Florida government says spring training contributes \$500 million to the state's economy every year, and provides work, albeit temporary, to thousands of residents. Carson, who spent 23 years as the

"Eighty per cent (of spectators) are from out of town. They've got to have somewhere to stay ... and eat."

Ken Carson, Dunedin Jays consultant

Jays' director of spring training operations, says training camp creates short-term work for roughly 200 people, and estimates tourists spend at least \$7 million locally each year, mostly at hotels and restaurants.

"Eighty per cent of (spectators) are from out of town," he said. "They've got to have someplace to stay and they've got to have someplace to eat."

He found out first-hand how much cities value spring training in 1991, when the Jays briefly explored the idea of jumping to the Cactus League in Arizona. The city of Dunedin responded to the news by spending \$14 million on a new Jays facility. Since then the numbers have continued to climb.

Jeff Mielke of the Lee County Sports Authority denies reports the county spent \$80 million to keep the Red Sox from leaving Fort Myers, but says estimates for a new publicly financed stadium range between \$50 million and \$60 million. And Goodyear, Ariz., invested \$76 million in the baseball complex that lured the Indians west.

Still, not everyone thinks spring training sites are

worth that much public money.

Last year, residents of Sarasota, Fla., reacted when they learned the Baltimore Orioles, nearing the end of their lease in Fort Lauderdale, wanted Sarasota to build them a new \$65-million facility. Residents demanded a referendum, but the Orioles settled the issue when they rejected the offer of \$30 million in upgrades to an existing stadium in Sarasota. They're still in Fort Lauderdale, but for how long is an open question. Fort Myers is in hot pursuit of the Orioles.

Porter questions whether a six-week training camp can generate enough revenue to justify public expenditures that large. Tourists spend plenty of money, but Porter points out a lot of the cash goes to the teams — who take their profits with them when they leave town at the end of March.



Still, Mielke and Carson maintain spring training facilities are profitable for cities that invest wisely. The Jays' licensing agreement with Dunedin pays the city

between \$225,000 and \$275,000 every year, while Fort Myers earns \$300,000 annually on its lease with the Red Sox.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Germany into hockey pool

OLYMPICS The German men's hockey team qualified for the Vancouver 2010 Winter Olympics yesterday after topping their qualification group with a 2-1 victory over Slovenia. Germany had also beat Austria 2-1 and Japan 7-1 to go through undefeated in their group matches in Germany. **REUTERS**

Stars place Avery on waivers

NHL The Dallas Stars placed Sean Avery on waivers Saturday and will be able to assign him to the AHL if he goes unclaimed by noon today. Avery spent the past two months in an NHL-mandated counselling program after making inappropriate remarks in Calgary in December. The winger has now been cleared from that program. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

What you need to know about

the plan for Alberta's energy future

The Government of Alberta's Provincial Energy Strategy is a long-term action plan intended to help Alberta achieve clean energy production, wise energy use and sustained economic prosperity.

Among the comprehensive range of actions outlined in the strategy are specific plans to:

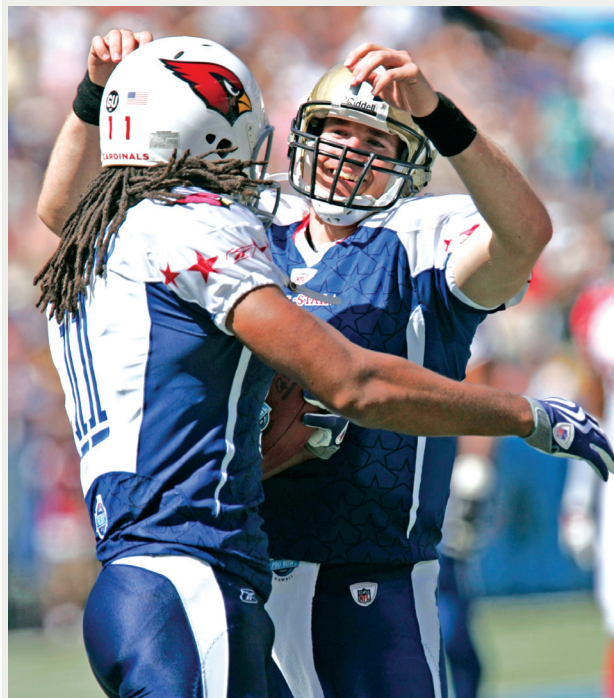
- Explore and support value-added initiatives for Alberta's energy industry.
- Increase innovation through research and development in reducing the environmental footprint of energy production and creating new "exportable" energy technologies.
- Change energy consumption behaviour by industry and consumers through enhanced conservation and emissions reductions.
- Support all Albertans in their individual efforts to make wise energy choices.

To learn more or to obtain a copy of Alberta's new Provincial Energy Strategy, visit www.energy.alberta.ca or call toll-free 310-4455.



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NFL NFC wins Pro Bowl



Larry Fitzgerald of the Arizona Cardinals, left, gets congratulated by Drew Brees of the New Orleans Saints after scoring a touchdown in the AFC-NFC Pro Bowl yesterday. Fitzgerald scored twice as the NFC won 30-21.

HUGH GENTY/REUTERS

Don't miss Matters of the Heart, Metro's exclusive feature series in the Workology section. There are jobs to be had that focus on falling in love, falling out of love and everything in between; we will be digging up the stories for you, so check for Workology on Mondays and Metronews.ca/work as well.

Metro Workology exclusive: Matters of the Heart

Workology

EDITOR: DOUGLAS DUNLOP, DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

College boosted by bad times?

The global economic downturn's impact on the job market is forcing some graduates to reconsider the value of their college degree, observes Walt Gardner in the Christian Science Monitor. There is a difference between learning for the sake of learning and learning relevant to making a living. Not intended to be trade schools, colleges are designed to develop the skills essential to lifelong learning, Gardner writes. **MERO NEWS SERVICES**

Planning your special day



Wedding planner Leah Elliott says she always tears up when the bride and groom kiss at the end of one of her weddings.

Matters of the Heart

RAFAEL BRUSILOV
for Metro Canada

Professional wedding planner Leah Elliott is a master of keeping her cool but when that fateful day of vows and kisses comes, she still cries every time.

Elliott, owner of Elan Wedding Consultants Inc., started the company in 2001 but had never thought of herself as an entrepreneur. She previously worked in administration and got into wedding planning by accident as a favour to her friends. Eventually she got so many requests that she figured it was time to go professional.

"I got to a point where I figured I have to start charging!" she joked.

As a wedding planner Elliott says her job is to take away all the stress and challenge of organizing the details of a wed-

Elephant?

Leah Elliott has had to do some very interesting things as a wedding planner — including bringing an elephant into Toronto's upscale Yorkville neighbourhood. You can visit her site at elan-weddings.com.



Leah Elliott

ding and let the happy couple instead focus on visualizing their dream wedding. Unlike the stereotype of some fussy old lady who thinks she knows what's best for a couple, Elliott says she is only interested in making sure the day goes exactly the way a couple wants.

"My main goal is to make sure the client is happy. I'm there to guide people and to make suggestions but I leave the final decisions up to the couple. People who know

what they want are very easy to deal with — it's only when people are indecisive that it's hard," Elliott said.

"I'm there to guide people and to make suggestions but I leave the final decisions up to the couple."

Leah Elliott

Elliott does most of her wedding planning in Toronto, London and Ottawa and she plans to keep it that way so she can oversee matters in-person and keep a high level of service quality. She says planning weddings in a city like Toronto keeps her job exciting because the city is such a melting pot and each wedding can be full

of surprises. Case in point: For one wedding, Elliott brought an elephant into Toronto's Yorkville area.

"There are so many cultures in Toronto that it keeps it fresh. I enjoy that," she said.

Unlike many planners who charge a percentage of the total wedding budget as their fee, Elliott only charges a flat fee and warns people to accept nothing less from a reputable planner.

"Charging a percentage of your budget is a conflict of interest — what's the incentive to keep costs down?" she said.

Working so closely with a bride and groom often means Elliott still gets emotional on a wedding day but she wouldn't have it any other way.

"I've always said the day I stop crying at weddings is the day I quit."

For more Matters of the Heart exclusive series check the Workology section Monday or stop by Metronews.ca/work

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Skating away with it

OddJobs

Diane Peters



If you've ever skated down Ottawa's famous Rideau Canal — perhaps during Winterlude, which is on right now — you have Alain Nantel to thank for the ice beneath your skates.

While Mother Nature, of course, takes care of the basics of freezing the 7.8 km skateway, it's Nantel, 38, and his staff that make sure the ice is just right.

"I go out on the ice every day," says Nantel, coordinator of operations, facilities and programs for the National Capital Commission (NCC). Usually on skates, he checks out the ice to make sure it's smooth, safe and free of snow.

He's in charge of the contractors who shovel the



The Rideau Canal Skateway.

canal — snow not only gets in the way of skaters, but it weighs down the ice and insulates it, causing it to melt — and those who nightly spray it with water to create a flat skating surface.

Every two or three days, he winds an auger through the ice to take a carrot-shaped sample.

He's looking for 30 cm of good quality ice with his sample: Clear ice is the best stuff, white ice is made of water and snow, and it's not as stable.

Nantel's not a scientist. In fact, the Ottawa native — who grew up an avid skier

and canal skater — studied business in college. His summer jobs always seemed to revolve around special events.

Eleven years ago he started working for the NCC, doing various jobs, mostly related to special events. Four years ago, he started taking care of the skateway, which is in its 39th season this year.

Critical decisions about the ice, such as when to open the skateway (Jan. 1 this year), are taken care of by the NCC's ice safety committee, a panel of experts.

But Nantel knows his ice

The Lowdown

Job title: Coordinator of the Rideau Canal Skateway

Salary: Fixed government salary

Education: Experience with special events, knowledge of the science of ice

Best part of the job: "Knowing you're working on a world-class facility."

Worst part of the job: "The cold."

too, thanks to on-the-job experience, plus the help of the NCC's comprehensive technical and safety manual on ice care. The document was created several years ago, combining information from experienced staff with scientific data.

This ice bible helps Nantel determine among other things where to place vendors' tents for events such as Winterlude.

When the ice is gone in spring and summer, Nantel keeps busy overseeing special events held at the NCC's parks throughout Ottawa.

Diane Peters once hawked magic pens at the Canadian National Exhibition. She's now a writer and part-time journalism instructor.

New principal at Queen's

Queen's University has appointed Daniel Robert Woolf, a Queen's alumnus whose son attends the university, as its newest principal. Woolf is said to be "perfectly positioned to ensure Queen's meets the challenges." **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Open offices not for everyone

Employers like them, but employees don't — and shouldn't: Study

JON TATTRE
for Metro Canada



Open-plan offices may save the company money and foster better communication, but they are making workers sick, stressed and under-productive, Australian scientists have found.

Dr. Vinesh Oommen from the Queensland University of Technology's Institute of Health and Biomedical Innovation began studying the health effects of workplace setups as employers embraced "novel" con-

cepts. Bosses are happy with the open areas, as staff can quickly move in and start work. They also save 20 per cent in construction costs, compared to a traditional, closed office.

"But no one is looking into the evidence to see if employees are satisfied with an open-plan work environment," Oommen said from his office in Brisbane, Australia. He and his team reviewed a global pool of research. What they found was "absolutely shocking," he said. The study, published in the Asia Pacific Journal of Health Management, found the open-office environment leads to higher stress and lower productivity.

Employees also get sick more, as flu and cold bugs fly around the air unimpeded by walls. Listening to

"We should develop facilities in the future based on what employees want, and it should not be based on building costs."

Dr. Vinesh Oommen

your neighbour's Baby's Got Back ringtone for 20 minutes while they're on lunch also ratchets up bad feelings, making for unhappy staff who are likely to drive up the turnover rate, the study found.

Open-plan offices lead to a high level of noise, loss of concentration, low work productivity, issues with privacy, lack of status, feelings of insecurity, job dissatisfaction, higher levels of stress, physical exhaustion and increased blood pressure levels. And, as anyone who watches the NBC show *The Office* knows, it makes workplace conflict almost inevitable.

In 90 per cent of the re-

search Oommen's team looked at, staff who worked in open-plan offices saw them in a negative light.

The positive aspects of open-plan offices, such as better communication, collaboration and increased accommodation for different employees, are greatly outweighed by the downsides.

"Based on this evidence, we urge all managers across the world to reconsider the use of an open-plan work environment," Oommen concluded. "We should develop facilities in the future based on what employees want, and it should not be based on building costs."

Sick on the job?

- More than four out of 10 (45 per cent) professionals surveyed admitted they very frequently go to work when they feel sick. However, only 17 per cent of managers polled believe the practice is common. The two surveys were developed by OfficeTeam.

- OfficeTeam notes that some managers may not realize the adverse effects of this practice on productivity, and offers them the following tips:

- Communicate expectations. Let staff know that you prefer they stay home when they're sick to ensure a quicker recovery.
- Set an example. Employees are more likely to stay home when they're sick if you do the same.
- Give options. Allow employees to work from home if they think they're coming down with a cold or the flu.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Project work an option in economic downturn

EMPLOYMENT Professionals who are trying to land a job may want to pursue project work.

According to specialized staffing service Robert Half International, companies that are unable to add full-time employees during periods of economic uncertainty often bring in professionals on a temporary basis, which can translate into opportunities for those who are looking to earn income, make new contacts and enhance their marketability during an extended job search.

"In the current environment, it can be challenging for businesses to predict their long-term staffing needs," said Max Messmer, chairman and CEO of Robert Half International. "Using project or temporary professionals for high-priority initiatives allows companies to maintain productivity

without committing to full-time hires until they are certain those positions are sustainable."

Messmer noted that while many people associate temporary work with the administrative profession, opportunities are available in a variety of specialized fields. Following are four of the most prevalent project roles in the current economy, according to

- **CREDIT AND COLLECTIONS SPECIALISTS** — Companies are working with these professionals to help manage credit risk and collect from delinquent accounts. In particular, firms seek individuals who can identify ways to reduce inefficiencies and maximize cash flow.

- **STAFF AND SENIOR ACCOUNTANTS** — In any economy, businesses need staff members who can perform core accounting tasks, such as maintain-

ing the general ledger system and analyzing and preparing financial statements.

- **HELP DESK AND DESKTOP SUPPORT PROFESSIONALS** — Businesses migrating from older operating systems, upgrading desktop systems and implementing a wider range of technologies are recruiting help desk and desktop support staff. These professionals are needed to answer questions and troubleshoot problems resulting from changes in IT products and services.

- **DEVELOPER/PROGRAMMER ANALYSTS** — Applications development professionals are being hired to write code, test and debug software applications, and analyze business application requirements. The most sought after expertise includes .NET, SharePoint, Java and PHP.

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Swanson and Eisler get hitched
Skating with Celebrities winners Kristy Swanson and Lloyd Eisler — who skated for Canada in the Olympics — were married on Saturday. The actress and the skating champ met while competing on the Fox reality show three years ago. **PEOPLE.COM**

Entertainment

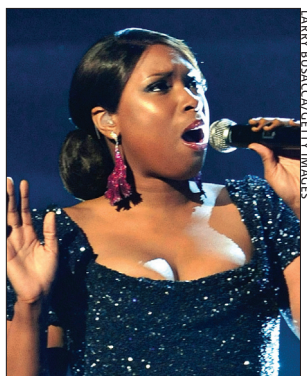
EDITOR: DEAN LISK, DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Danes to wed

Claire Danes and Hugh Dancy are getting married, a rep for the pair confirmed. Danes, 29, and Dancy, 33, met while filming *Evening in Newport, R.I.*, and had been dating for more than a year. **PEOPLE.COM**



Alison Krauss and Robert Plant won five Grammys.



Jennifer Hudson won the Grammy for best R&B recording.

Plant, Krauss top awards

Rock icon, bluegrass queen take home five Grammys

Former Led Zeppelin singer Robert Plant received a “whole lotta love” at the Grammy Awards last night, winning five prizes including album of the year for an acclaimed collaboration with bluegrass queen Alison Krauss.

The 60-year-old musician, enshrined in rock annals as the golden-haired, bare-chested singer for one of the biggest bands of the 1970s, was one of several British artists to take centre stage at the music industry’s top honors.

Other compatriots included rock band Coldplay, who won three awards, including song of the year,

and 20-year-old rookie Adele, who was named best new artist.

R&B star Chris Brown inadvertently supplied some last-minute fireworks. The two-time nominee canceled a scheduled performance amid reports that he was involved in a domestic-violence incident in the early hours of Sunday. His girlfriend, three-time nominee Rihanna, also scrapped her planned appearance.

Plant and Krauss, 37, swept all five categories in which they were also nominated. They also won song of the year, and prizes in the pop, folk/Americana, and country categories.



Rappers T.I., from left, Jay-Z, and Lil Wayne perform during the Grammy Awards last night.

“I’m bewildered,” Plant said upon winning album of the year, the event’s final prize. “In the old days, we would have called this selling out, but I think it’s a good way to spend a Sunday.”

Rapper Lil Wayne won four Grammys, including best rap album for *Tha Carter III*, the biggest-selling U.S. release of 2008. He led the field with eight nominations in six categories.

Coldplay, which followed with seven nominations, ended up with three Grammys. They won song of the year for *Viva La Vida*, the chart-topping hit that inspired a plagiarism lawsuit from virtuoso guitarist Joe Satriani, who claims that it rips off one of his tunes.

Plant and Krauss’ *Raising Sand*, on which the odd couple reworked old folk ballads and R&B chestnuts, was an instant critical and commercial hit.

With 26 wins, Krauss now ties with French conductor Pierre Boulez as the third-most-honored artist in the Grammys’ 51-year-history. The only artists ahead of her are late classical conductor Sir Georg Solti with 31, and prolific



Best rock album nominees Kings Of Leon on the red carpet.

“In the old days, we would have called this selling out, but I think it’s a good way to spend a Sunday.” Robert Plant

producer/composer Quincy Jones with 27.

Led Zeppelin were never honoured during their active years between 1968 and 1980, the year the band broke up following the death of drummer John Bonham. Plant’s sole wins to date were for a 1990s collaboration with former bandmate Jimmy Page and for a *Raising Sand* tune with Krauss last year. **REUTERS**



U2’s Bono performs new single *Get on Your Boots* during the Grammy Awards.



Canadian Jason Reitman and Margaret Yen took home the Grammy for best compilation soundtrack album for a motion picture for *Juno*.

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Snuggle in front of these

Only a few more days till Valentine's Day, folks. Establishing a romantic mood is essential, and it's never too early to start. And, as is often the case, television can provide an easy, inexpensive, low-maintenance alternative as a lead-up to the main event:

YOUNG LOVE

Was there ever a more classic tale of unrequited love than the saga of Charlie Brown and the Little Red-Haired Girl? Their star-crossed affair plays out yet again Tuesday night on ABC, in A Charlie Brown Valentine, a 2002 special produced two years after the death of Peanuts papa Charles Schulz. Filling out the hour is the original 1975 'toon, Be My Valentine, Charlie Brown.

DATE NIGHT AT THE MOVIES

Toss a bag of popcorn in the microwave, crack open a bottle of wine and enjoy some of the most romantic movies ever to hit the big screen. Most of them, oddly enough, are airing in the morning.



Bridges of Madison County features a top-notch cast.

Valentine's Day

Romeo & Juliet: It all starts here, first with Shakespeare, and then the 1936 movie version with Norma Shearer and Leslie Howard as the titular doomed lovers, with John Barrymore along to lend gravitas. It airs on TCM Canada on Tuesday.

Love Story: Love means never having to say you're sorry. An often useful, if unrealistic sentiment, first coined by Ali MacGraw in the 1970 romance classic, also starring Ryan O'Neal before he got all wrinkled and scary. It's on Friday at on The Movie Network's

MRPIX.

Gone with the Wind: One of the most romantic movies of all time stars Clark Gable and Vivienne Leigh, airing on MRPIX Wednesday, basking in the warm afterglow of Atlanta on fire.

Working Girl: Harrison Ford and Melanie Griffith, lots of bad '80s fashion – what more could you want? On AMC Canada, on Thursday.

Bridges of Madison County: Craggy Clint Eastwood woos a married Meryl Streep, and the screen ain't big enough for both of them. But if you've got a big-screen TV – and even if you don't – you

will get completely sucked in to this compelling tale of middle-aged attraction. CTV will show the film on the night of V-Day.

Out of Africa: Even more lovestruck Meryl a world away in Kenya, in the biographical romance airing Monday on MRPIX.

REALLY REEL ROMANCE

Fantasy's fine, but let's get real. Thursday's CBC Doc Zone has the ultimate happily-ever-after with Love Interrupted, two Romeo & Juliet-ish tales of young couples driven apart by race, religion, class and/or parental disapproval, who somehow manage to reunite later on in life.

From reunion back to separation, the second season of CBC's hit reality show, The Week the Women Went is the ultimate way to tell your loved one how much they are wanted and needed, airing Wednesdays at 8 p.m. on CBC.

• For specific show times, please consult your local TV listings.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Slumdog, Milk take top writing awards

Rags-to-riches romance Slumdog Millionaire furthered its winning streak in Hollywood's awards season Saturday, earning best adapted screenplay for writer Simon Beaufoy from the Writers Guild of America.

Milk, about slain, 1970s-era gay politician Harvey Milk, grabbed best original screenplay for Dustin Lance Black who gave an impassioned speech challenging the gay community to re-energize itself in the struggle for gay equality. Black talked about how Milk's legacy inspired him to dream that one day his screenplay could be made into a film and reach as many people as it had with a message of hope.

"Big dreams are how change really happens," Black told the audience of film and television writers. "Join me in continuing this fight for civil rights."

But the night truly belonged to Slumdog, which tells of a young Indian boy who competes for love and money on a TV game show.



Sean Penn stars in Milk.

Together with the WGA's honour, it has now earned top awards from the other major Hollywood guilds and is the clear frontrunner for the best movie Oscar.

The Oscars, given out by the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences on Feb. 22, and many of the guild members also belong to the academy making their awards key indicators of winners of Academy Awards, the world's top film honours. REUTERS

Box office

Following are the top 10 films at the North American box office for the three-day weekend beginning on Feb. 6, according to studio estimates:

- 1 **He's Just Not That Into You:** \$27.5 million US
- 2 **Taken:** \$20.3 million
- 3 **Coraline:** \$16.3 million
- 4 **The Pink Panther 2:** \$12 million
- 5 **Paul Blart: Mall Cop:** \$11 million
- 6 **Push:** \$10.2 million
- 7 **Slumdog Millionaire:** \$7.4 million
- 8 **Gran Torino:** \$7.2 million
- 9 **The Uninvited:** \$6.4 million
- 10 **Hotel for Dogs:** \$5.8 million

REUTERS

GlobalStyle



Kenya Hunt

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critics' corner

Sophie
After breaking up with Tiago, Matt goes on a bar-hopping binge, dragging Sophie along. When she's had enough, she seeks help from her new neighbor in getting out of Matt's clutches. Estelle gets involved in a role-playing exercise at Matt's hospital in the new episode "You've Got Fe-Mail." 8:30 PM on CBRT



CSI: Miami
What does it say about our state of affairs when lawyers might be the ones committing the crimes? This week Horatio and the CSI team go head to head with a defense attorney who might be involved in a murder cover-up. Few things are better than art imitating life, unless it's life imitating art. 8 PM on CFCN; 11 PM on KREM

Heroes
Superpowers continue to not be the best things to wish for when, after a series of events, the Heroes are on the run from their latest adversary and one of their own, Nathan Petrelli. When Matt paints a series of prophetic images, the tragic fate of someone close to him is revealed. Elsewhere, Sylar continues to search for his father. 8 PM on CICT; 10 PM on KHQ

CA	Vu	SC	7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
2/9/09	267	351	- ACCESS	Truth, Duty, Valour	Medium (HDTV) (N)		Gossip Girl (HDTV)		Smallville "Requiem" (N)		Truth, Duty
	243	317	3 CFCN	etalk	Hollywood	CSI: Miami (HDTV) (N)	Big Bang Th	Gary Unmarr	Two/Half Men	Corner Gas (N)	News (N)
	-	-	4 OMNI	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	News	News		The Simpsons	King	Metropia
	-	371	5 KKLY	4 News at 6	4 News at 6:30	Entertainment	The Insider (N)				True Beauty
	245	306	6 CBRT	Coronation St.	Jeopardy! (N)	Little Mosque	Sophie (N)		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	244	338	7 CICT	ET Canada	Entertainment	Heroes (HDTV) (N)			24 (HDTV PA) (N)		News Hour
	246	-	8 CKAL	Law & Order: SVU		True Beauty "Get Fit"	The Bachelor (N)				Your City
	119	705	9 CBXFT	Virginie (SC)	Les Parent (N)	L'Auberge du chien noir (SC)	Les Boys (SC)	Tout sur moi	Le T��l��journal et Les Nou		TJ Alberta
	-	-	10 SHAW	(6) Local Programming					Local Programming		
	-	372	12 KREM	News (N)	Hollywood	The Doctors	Big Bang Th	How I Met	Two/Half Men	Worst Week	CSI: Miami (N)
primetime	-	374	14 KSPS	NewsHour With Jim Lehrer		'Allo, 'Allo!	Antiques Roadshow (N)		American Experience (HDTV) (N)	(DVS)	
	502	390	15 CBC	CBC News: The National		Crash: The Next Depression	CBC News: The National		CBC News: The National		Crash
	-	370	16 KHQ	News (N)	Be-Millionaire	Jeopardy! (N)	Chuck (HDTV)		Heroes (HDTV) (N)		Medium
	-	373	22 KAYU	The Simpsons	Raymond	Two/Half Men	House "Unfaithful" (N)		24 (HDTV PA) (N)		News (N)
	297	652	37 WPIX	One Tree Hill (HDTV)		PIX News at Ten Tong.	Two/Half Men	Friends	Sex and-City	According-Jim	Frasier
	500	500	29 CNN	Larry King Live		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)			Larry King Live		Cooper 360
	508	502	31 CNN2	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Nancy Grace	Showbiz Tonight		Lou Dobbs Tonight		Nancy Grace
	400	400	21 TSN	NHL Hockey	SportsCentre	That's Hockey!	SportsCentre	Off the Record	Auto Race: Targa		Winter X
	408	418	27 net	NHL Hockey Montreal Canadiens at Calgary Flames. (HDTV) (Live)				Sportsnet Con.	Sportsnet Connected		Flames in Hour
	410	403	30 SCORE	(7:15) WWE Monday Night Raw			(9:15) Score Tonight		WWE Monday Night Raw		
news	411	457	44 OLN	Mantracker		Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Mantracker		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	48 SPEED	This Week in NASCAR (N)		Barrett-Jackson	Car Crazy	Pass Time	Speed Report Special Edition		NASCAR Week
	552	543	20 YTV	Drake & Josh	iCarly	Adrenaline Proj	Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	Prank Patrol	Zixx Level	Falcon Beach
	557	541	39 FAM	Zoey 101	Life Derek	Wizards-Place	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School
	555	545	67 TOON	Ben 10	Johnny Test	Totally Spies	Total Drama	6TEEN	Futurama	Punch	Robot Chicken
	575	583	11 CMT	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Ult. Coyote Ugly Search	Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba
	553	546	17 TREE	Little Bear	Miss Spider	Comfy Couch	Rolie Polie Olie	Max & Ruby	Backyardigans	Dora-Explorer	Go, Diego, Go!
	-	-	18 CHTV	The Insider (N)	E! News	Snoop Father	Snoop Father	The Soup (N)	How I Met		News (N)
	505	398	19 TWN	(5) EarthWatch One		EarthWatch One	EarthWatch Two				
	602	568	23 W	Style by Jury	Style by Jury	Will & Grace	Friends	How Clean	Kim	Love It or List It	Dollars
sports	521	560	24 TLC	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	Little People	Little People	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate
	603	561	25 FOOD	Food Detective	Road Tasted	Hell's Kitchen		Chef School	Chef School	Challenge	Food Detective
	615	520	26 A&E	Intervention "Angelina"		Paranormal	Paranormal	Paranormal	Paranormal	Intervention "Sylvia"	Intervention
	617	522	32 SHOW	Wife Swap		The Outer Limits		Kink in Hair	Kink in Hair	Rent-A-Goalie	Name Is Earl
	601	562	33 SLICE	Tabatha's Salon Takeover		Project Runway Canada		ET Canada	Matchmaker	Project Runway Canada	Trading Sp
	-	633	34 ENC2	Man-Seasons	(7:20) Betrayal of Silence (1990, Drama)		A Streetcar Named Desire **** (1951, Drama)				Free Money *
	520	505	35 DISC	Dirty Jobs "Egg Farm"		Vermintors (N)	Daily Planet		Dirty Jobs "Egg Farm"		Vermintors
	620	523	36 BRAVO	Willie Nelson-Wynton Marsalis			Law & Order "Missing"		Without a Trace		Fire-Amazon
	294	650	40 WPCH	House-Payne	House-Payne	Welcome to	Welcome to	Family Guy	Family Guy	Seinfeld	Bad Moon * (1996, Horror)
	626	547	41 COM	Laughs	Comedy Now	Air Farce	Just for Laughs		Corner Gas	The Simpsons	South Park
family	-	539	42 TCM	The Devil and Miss Jones		Black Legion *** (1937, Crime Drama)		Bound for Glory *** (1976, Biography)	David Carradine.		
	628	584	43 SPIKE	CSI: NY "Hostage"		CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		CSI: NY "Admissions"		Disorderly
	522	516	45 HIST	Underground War		NCIS "Trojan Horse"	Battle 360		Underground War		NCIS
	627	528	46 SPACE	Star Trek: Voyager		Ghost Hunters	Stargate SG-1		Star Trek: Next Gener.		Trek: Voyager
	-	-	47 AMC	(6) Saturday Night Fever *** (1977)		Thelma & Louise *** (1991, Drama) (HDTV)	Susan Sarandon, Geena Davis, Harvey Keitel.				
	619	525	49 TROP	What Happen?	What Happen?	TV Made, Do It	News Show	Tube Tales	E News	Make or Break	TV Made, Do It
	600	564	50 HGTV	Property Virgin	House Hunters	Ambrose Price	Petal Pushers	Holmes on Homes		Property Virgin	Income Prop.
	501	391	52 CTV	CTV Newsnet		News	CTV Newsnet	News	CTV Newsnet		News
	504	508	70 BNN	Squeeze Play		Market Call		Financ-Future	Market Call	Berman's Call	Money Talks
	526	507	92 VIVA	Commander In Chief		Dollars	Body-Evidence	Mediums	In Dreams	Judging Amy	Commander
cable variety	269	350	93 APTN	MYTV	The Mix	La Voix Mechif	Dancing-Spirit	Nedaa: Your Eye on the Yukon	Suaangan	Sharing Circle	Cowboy C'try
	-	-	94 MCP	(6:30) News	News	Matchmaker	Mom's-Upset	It Will Be Difficult to Love		Marimar	Pinoy-Entertain
	571	581	100 MMM	Don't Forget the Lyrics!		Don't Forget the Lyrics!		Where You At	Back In	Party of Five	Don't Forget
	570	580	101 MM	MuchTopTens		MuchNews	The NewMusic	MuchVibe		So You Think You Can Dance	
	581	566	102 MTV	A Double Shot at Love		The City	City Live After	MTV Live	MTV News		The City



Kate Moss and Anglea Lindvall have been unveiled as the stars of Stella McCartney's latest fashion ad campaign, femalefirst.co.uk reports. The spring/summer '09 line, shot on location in Puerto Rico was photographed by Ryan McGinley. **METRO NEWS SERVICES**

Celebrity Buzz

Clooney and Margulies are still good friends

FRIENDSHIP Former ER lovers George Clooney and Julianna Margulies are still crazy for each other after all these years — as pals, that is, people.com reports.

The actors — who played the dashing Dr. Doug Ross and his onscreen love, nurse Carol Hathaway — recently reunited for the medical drama's final season.

"It's been nine years and it was like we'd never been apart," Margulies told eyebrow guru Ramy Gafni, who recently tended to her famous brows at his RamySpa in Manhattan, people.com says.

"She said, 'The chemistry was still there.' She said she loves him to pieces and that

he's such a great guy," says Gafni.

In the final season, viewers will finally find out what became of Ross and his onscreen flame, who never married in the earlier episodes. Clooney, 47, left the show in 1999 for movie stardom, winning an Oscar for 2005's *Syriana*. Margulies, 42, who exited ER in 2000, and her husband, attorney Keith

Lieberthal, had their first child, Kieran, in January.

NBC and Warner Bros. declined to comment on the casting of ER's final season. But on Jan. 26, Clooney told People magazine of his return to County General, "It was fun to be back and it was good to see those guys."

Margulies's rep has previously confirmed she will return to the show. The final episode of ER will air April 2 on NBC.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



GETTY IMAGES PHOTOS

Winehouse curbs cravings with pot

ADDICTION Amy Winehouse has allegedly found just the thing to keep her cravings for drugs and alcohol down: Marijuana.

According to U.K. tabloid the Sun, the troubled singer has been smoking as many as 10 joints a day while hiding out in St. Lucia. "Amy hasn't touched crack or cocaine for months," a friend tells the newspaper.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Rihanna reveals her humanitarian side

CHARITY Rihanna is stepping forward to help a five-year-old New York City girl find a bone marrow donor — the second time in a year that the Grammy Award winner has helped a leukemia victim seek a match, says people.com.

"When I saw the video of Jasmina it broke my heart. It is so unfair that for a black patient it's so much harder to find a bone marrow match," the

singer tells People magazine exclusively. "Jasmina has acute leukemia and she needs a bone marrow transplant to live."

Last February, Rihanna helped New Yorker Lisa Flynn find a match by putting out a call for donors on People.com. More than 5,000 donors came forward, says Katharina Harf of DKMS, the world's largest non-profit marrow donor center.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Usher's family crisis

PEOPLE Usher is dealing with a family crisis, online.com reports.

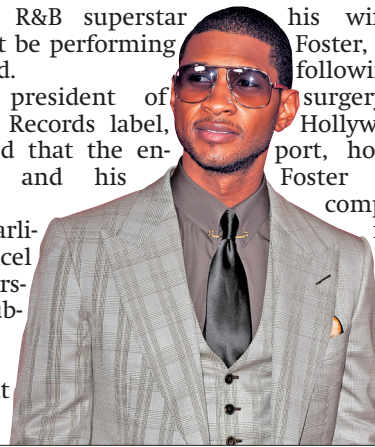
Record mogul Clive Davis shocked guests at his annual star-studded pre-Grammys party Saturday night when he announced that the R&B superstar would not be performing as planned.

Davis, president of Usher's J Records label, announced that the entertainer and his mother phoned earlier to cancel his rehearsal and subsequent performance at

the Beverly Hilton because of a "serious illness in the family."

Reps for Usher declined to comment or elaborate on the sad news, but a source close to the 30-year-old denies rumours that his wife, Tameka Foster, 37, had died following plastic surgery. Access Hollywood does report, however, that Foster did suffer complications from a cosmetic procedure in Brazil.

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Paltrow reaches out to Allen

PEOPLE Hollywood actress Gwyneth Paltrow has come to the defence of British pop star Lily Allen — urging the press to leave the singer alone.

Paltrow knows Allen through the Smile hitmaker's screenwriter mother, Allison Owen, who worked with the actress on two films — 2003's

Sylvia and Proof in 2005.

And the Iron Man star is adamant the wide media coverage of Allen's personal life is unfair because the 23-year-old is so young for her age.

Paltrow tells Britain's Elle magazine, "The way I feel about that is: Shame on you. They're doing that to a child! Lily is not a woman yet."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



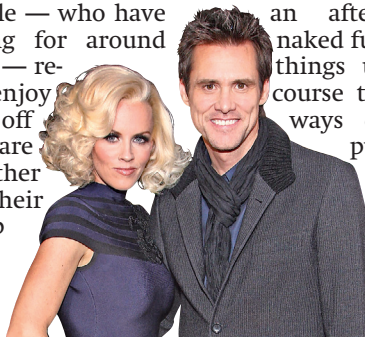
Jim and Jenny's naked days

COUPLE Jim Carrey and Jenny McCarthy have naked days, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The couple — who have been dating for around three years — reportedly enjoy stripping off when they are alone together to keep their relationship exciting.

A source said: "When they're alone they prefer to be nude most of the time. They always have an afternoon of naked fun. It spices things up. But of course they are always dressed in public."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Drew turns to food when upset

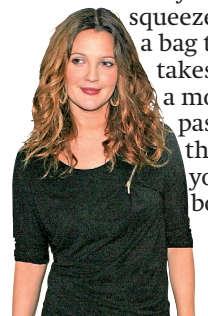
RELATIONSHIPS Drew Barrymore mends her broken heart by eating cheese, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The He's Just That Not Into You actress, who has been married twice, can't help indulging in processed dairy products when her love life is floundering.

When asked what she does after a romance ends, Barrymore replied: "Head straight for the carbs. Macaroni and cheese. Kraft. Deluxe. The kind with the cheese you

squeeze out of a bag that takes at least a month to pass through your body."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Despite critics, Simpson shows off

IMAGE After more than a week of battling body bulies and fashion critics, Jessica Simpson showed off her figure in a tiny pair of Daisy Duke-style short-shorts onstage in Grand Rapids, Mich., Thursday night, people.com reports.

"She looked phenomenal," gushed concert-goer Scott Pierce, 27, a local Internet technology sales rep.

But Simpson — who seemed nervous and tentative at times — told the crowd of 15,000 that it had been "a rough week."

At one point in the show she said, "You definitely have to confront everything you go through."

METRO NEWS SERVICES



Everyone should make time
for a noon hour quickie.
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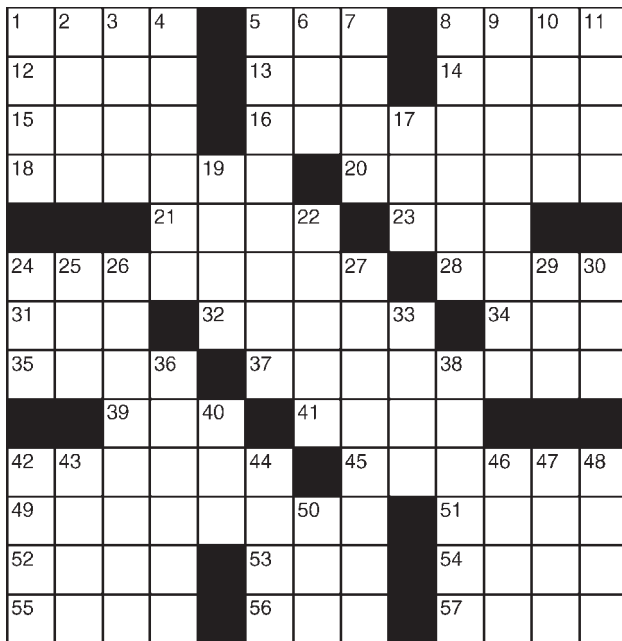


**Today**Afternoon clouds
2°C / -8°C**Tuesday**Mostly cloudy
-2°C / -8°C**Wednesday**Mostly cloudy
-6°C / -13°C**Andrew Schultz, Weather Specialist – Breakfast Television**

"I get to spread the word on how your day, evening or weekend will shape up with our ever-changing weather here in Alberta."

WEEKDAYS AT 6 A.M.

Take Five



Crossword across

- | | |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 Scolded | 34 Unit |
| 5 Young lion | 35 Commandment pronoun |
| 8 Skaters' venue | 37 "Sinkers" |
| 12 Dorothy's destination | 39 "That tastes awful!" |
| 13 Work with | 41 Infamous lyre player |
| 14 Mideast port city ... | 42 Damage |
| 15 ... and a dweller therein | 45 Household linens |
| 16 Soft fabric | 49 Agree |
| 18 Grayish red | 51 Pelvic bones |
| 20 Long, harsh speech | 52 Evidenced a pinprick |
| 21 House section | 53 Frank McCourt book |
| 23 Cauldron | 54 — and void |
| 24 Heavy military footwear | 55 "— Breckinridge" |
| 28 Makes a hole | 56 Type squares |
| 31 Rowing prop | 57 Mirth |
| 32 Missionary Junipero | |

Crossword down

- | | |
|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 African nation | 27 Actuality |
| 2 Circle dance | 29 Wildebeest |
| 3 Mosque VIP | 30 Prepared |
| 4 Go ashore | 33 Taj Mahal city |
| 5 Repeated monotonously | 36 Kampala's country |
| 6 Mex. neighbor | 38 Optimistic |
| 7 A-number-1 | 40 Toper's interruption |
| 8 Rifleman's tamping device | 42 Cold War weapon (Abbr.) |
| 9 Act of thinking | 43 Magical herb of myth |
| 10 Dweeb | 44 Ceremony |
| 11 Leg joint | 46 Hebrew month |
| 17 With it | 47 Anger |
| 19 Weeps loudly | 48 Harvard's rival |
| 22 Dunderhead | 50 Poorly lit |
| 24 Make marginal notes | |
| 25 "That feels good" | |
| 26 Casino employee | |

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:



7	9	1	5	8	2	4	3	6
2	4	8	3	6	9	7	5	1
5	3	6	7	4	1	9	8	2
6	1	4	2	3	7	8	9	5
3	2	5	4	9	8	1	6	7
8	7	9	6	1	5	2	4	3
9	5	3	1	7	4	6	2	8
4	6	7	8	2	3	5	1	9
1	8	2	9	5	6	3	7	4

Find today's answers + play more games at metronews.ca

SUDOKU SOLVE TIME:

Under 13 minGenius
13-17 min.....Scholar

17-21 minSmart
21-25 minNot bad
25+ min.....Keep practising

Metro Recipe of the Day



Chicken Brochettes with Pita

INGREDIENTS:

4 chicken breast fillets, each about 150 g, cut into bite-sized pieces
1 large green pepper, seeded and cut into bite-sized pieces
1 tbsp (15 ml) olive oil
Juice of 1 lemon
4 pita breads
1/3 cup (75 ml) soft goat cheese with garlic and herbs
4 crisp lettuce leaves
2 tomatoes, sliced
Salt and freshly ground black pepper
Sprigs of fresh flat-leaf parsley to garnish

METHOD:

1. Soak eight wooden skewers in cold water for at least 30 minutes, or use metal skewers. Preheat grill or broiler to moderate heat.
2. Thread alternate pieces

chicken and green pepper onto skewers, pushing ingredients close together to keep juicy. Brush with oil.
3. Grill brochettes 7-8 minutes per side until chicken is cooked through. Sprinkle with lemon juice.
4. Meanwhile, warm pita breads, either under grill or in toaster. Spread goat cheese on lettuce leaves.
5. To serve, split pitas open and insert lettuce and tomato slices. Season brochettes, then slip chicken and peppers into pita pockets. Garnish with sprigs of fresh parsley.

SERVES 4

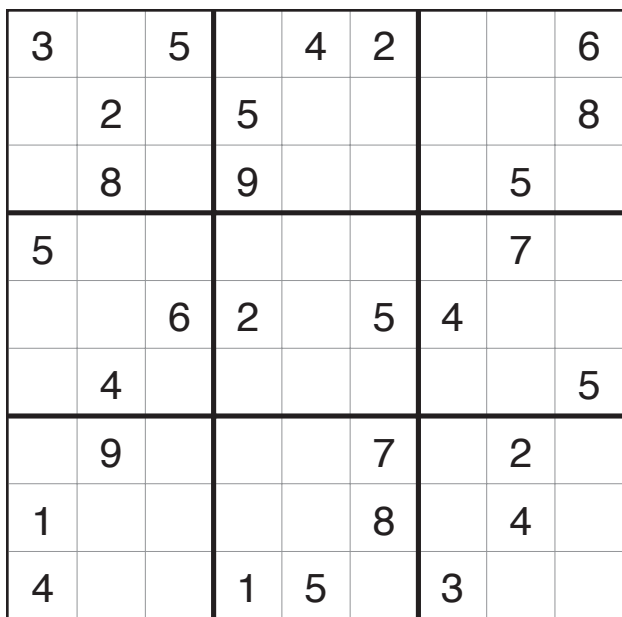
rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!



Sudoku

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone – one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.



Horoscopes

AVATAR VENUS

ARIES

MARCH 21-APRIL 20



Rowdiness alienates somebody you hope to attract. Don't tell an idiot he is offensive. Your courage is admired and will soon be rewarded.

LIBRA

SEPT 23-OCT 23



You'll get further ahead by starting early. Be careful when sharing emotional information. Taking it easy will be hard to do without support.

TAURUS

APRIL 21-MAY 21



Worry not, the universe is unfolding properly. You bother someone who wants to cheat. Don't pursue a topic if a sensitive person gets upset.

SCORPIO

OCT 24-NOV 22



Change your viewpoint about financial matters. It's a challenge to be sensible about an ailment. You might be feeling that you're left out of things.

GEMINI

MAY 22-JUNE 21



A friend introduces an adorable person. Be thankful when someone does the right thing. Don't be fooled by anyone who tries to manipulate you.

SAGITTARIUS

NOV 23-DEC 21



Foolishness can't be avoided — so you might as well enjoy it. A foreigner wrecks your work. Start getting rid of useless things.

CANCER

JUNE 22-JULY 22



Embarrassment is forgotten when you're praised. An idiot pushes your buttons. You'll have to rescue a troubled person when you don't want to.

CAPRICORN

DEC 22-JAN 20



Don't panic if someone is unconventional. A friend's experience makes an interesting story. A relationship issue causes turmoil around you.

LEO

JULY 23-AUG 23



Learning a new skill is hard but persistence brings rewards. Fight against egotism when planning an event. Unnecessary anxieties must be dealt with.

AQUARIUS

JAN 21-FEB 18



Messages must be acted upon immediately. You are admired for a stand that you took. You should stay away from people who spread germs.

VIRGO

AUG 24-SEPT 22



A meeting changes your attitude when the surprising truth comes out. Bid farewell to something you like. Ignore bad news that won't come about.

PISCES

FEB 19-MARCH 20



Think very carefully before you make a choice. It's to your advantage to be honest. Intense emotions will rise up, stay calm if you can.

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CANADA'S ECONOMIC ACTION PLAN

The Government of Canada's proposed Economic Action Plan contains new tax measures that may benefit you.

If you're a homeowner, or are planning to become a homeowner, the Action Plan can help.

Support for home renovations

- ✓ For a limited time, the new *Home Renovation Tax Credit* means homeowners could receive up to \$1,350 in tax relief on renovation expenses

Support for first-time homebuyers

- ✓ An increase to \$25,000 in the amount you can withdraw from your RRSP under the Home Buyers' Plan to purchase or build a first home
- ✓ A First-Time Home Buyers' Tax Credit that allows you to save up to \$750 on the closing costs of a first home

Canada's Economic Action Plan

www.actionplan.gc.ca

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